Cutting of Khair Trees by Forest Mafia

3851. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE :
SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that under-sized Khair trees are being cut by forest mafia and smuggled from Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have taken any action against the mafia ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) No report regarding cutting of under-sized Khair trees by Forest Mafia and its smuggling outside Himachal Pradesh has been received by the Government.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) Government of Himachal Pradesh have taken following steps to check illicit felling of trees :—

(i) Nationalisation of forest harvesting in the State.

(ii) Enactment and strict implementation of Himachal Pradesh Land Preservation Act, 1978.

(iii) Enactment and strict implementation of Himachal Pradesh Forest Produce (Regulation of Trade) Act, 1982 to check illicit felling of trees and smuggling of timber.

(iv) Directorate of Enforcement has been created to lay down policies and co-ordinate activities of the Forests, Police and Enforcement Departments to check illicit felling and illegal trade in timber.

(v) To catch the offenders and to give incentives to the informers and non-gazetted staff, a scheme for giving rewards upto 10% of the value of the forest products seized subject to a maximum of Rs. 1,000 has been notified.

Clearance from Pollution Control Board

3852. SHRI PASUMPON THA KIRUTTINAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that clearance from the Pollution Control Board has become an impediment for growth of industries;

(b) whether a uniform policy code procedure and fees are being followed by all the State Governments;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the details regarding Tamil Nadu;

(d) whether Government have exempted small scale industries from the purview of Pollution Control Board; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) to (e) Directions have been issued to all the State Pollution Control Boards to simplify the consent procedure for industrial units. It has been specified that there would be no need for industries to obtain periodic renewal of consent till 15 years or such time the unit modifies its process/processes. For small scale industrial units which are not in the identified polluting sectors, the submission of the completed consent application form and obtaining an acknowledgement will be sufficient.

All such industries still have to conform to the existing requirements in regard to the control of pollution, and the directions issued also specified that the concerned State Pollution Control Boards may conduct random checks or call for information from any small scale units, and make a formal consent order prescribing conditions as required. There is a uniform policy in this regard.

There were some differences in consent application procedures adopted by the State Pollution Control Boards. The directions issued to them recently are uniform for all States.

Illegal Felling of Trees

3853. SHRI BHADRESWAR GOHAIN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that there is widespread illegal felling of precious trees of all varieties by unscrupulous individuals at Charaipung area of Sibsagar district of Assam an connivance with the forest officials and selfish politicians causing widespread environ-